



# Don't get frozen out of the

*Breathe easy*  
at home program

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## Rethink Your Drink: Obesity & Asthma

Asthma and obesity have a considerable impact on public health and their prevalence has increased in recent years. Numerous studies have linked these disorders. Most prospective studies show that childhood obesity is a risk factor for asthma and have found a positive correlation between baseline body mass index and the subsequent development of asthma. The Boston Public Health Commission has dedicated its resources to awareness about obesity and the impact that sugar-sweetened beverages have on obesity rates.

What is a sugar-sweetened beverage? It is a drink with added sugar or other sweeteners, which provides added calories and little to no nutritional value.

Drinking large amounts of sugary drinks can increase the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and gout. A child's risk of becoming obese increases by 60% with each additional sugar-sweetened beverage consumed daily. Children who drink carbonated sugary drinks have almost double the risk of dental issues like cavities and tooth decay. In the city of Boston, children are the population most affected by asthma-related hospital visits and are therefore a target population of the Commission's campaign.

The Boston Public Health Commission recommends healthier drinking options such as water, low-fat milk, 100% fruit juice, diet sodas and teas, and low-calorie sports drinks.

For more information of the Boston Public Health Commission's sugar-sweetened beverage awareness campaign, visit:

<http://bphc.org>  
<http://www.fatsmack.org>



## BEAH Success Story

A referral from Children's Hospital came to Breathe Easy in March of this year. This family was also referred in August of last year and had cockroach and rodent infestation as well as holes throughout their housing unit. In that instance, all

violations were corrected by January of this year through the Housing Court process.

Two months later, seemingly, the infestations and holes had returned. Upon inspection, inspectors also observed mold/chronic dampness in the bathroom and a bedroom.

Thankfully,

violations were corrected in July through involving Housing Court as well. The property owner not only exterminated the unit again but also ripped walls out in the apartment to address the source of the mold. Both the family and providers were happy to find corrected violations within such a short time period as four months.



Please remember to update your patients' Asthma Action Plans!

# Don't get frozen out of the

## Flu Season

Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine is already available this fall. A flu vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu. A person needs a flu vaccine every year and this year only **one** flu vaccine is needed to provide full protection against the flu. There are two types of vaccines available, one is a shot given in the arm and the other is a spray given in the nose. To find out more about the 2010/2011 flu vaccine see the links below.

To learn more about the flu: <http://www.bphc.org/programs/infectiousdisease/infectiousdiseasesatoz/influenza/individualsandfamilies/vaccination/Pages/Home.aspx>

To find out about **free** flu shot clinics:

<http://www.bphc.org/programs/infectiousdisease/infectiousdiseasesatoz/influenza/Pages/TopStoriesview.aspx?ID=82>



### NEW RESOURCE!

Below is the BPHC "Boston Smoke free Homes" website. Tenants can look for smoke free apartments and landlords can list smoke free rental units for free on the registry. In addition they are many other smoke free resources for tenants and landlords.



<http://www.bostonsmokefreehomes.org/Pages/default.aspx>

## BEAH Website Updates

The BEAH homepage now has new, pertinent information for providers about the program and how to use it. We also made changes to our referral forms, hopefully making them easier for providers to navigate and for us to collect important data about the program.

Firstly please remember that the check box at the bottom of the Breathe Easy referral sends information directly to the Health Homes asthma education program for easier

dual-referrals.

On the form itself, there will soon be required boxes to click identifying public and Section 8 housing so as to better assess the housing types of BEAH referrals.

There will also be a checkbox required before referral submission. This section will outline any privacy matters related to the program including HIPAA rights as well as the public nature of City of Boston protocols. This

pop-up window will also remind providers to have patients sign the HIPAA consent form before submitting referrals.

We hope that you find these changes useful and helpful to you and your patients. If you have any questions about referrals or about the website, please contact the Breathe Easy at Home Coordinator at 617-534-5966.

## Back to School Safety

Asthma attacks and respiratory complications can keep kids from attending school. What can also contribute to absenteeism is not taking proper safety measures when returning to school.

The Boston Public Health Commission's Mayor's Helpline and the Offices of Injury Prevention, Chronic

Disease Prevention, and Communicable Disease Control, have released an informational flyer with some safety tips concerning up-to-date immunizations, health insurance, healthy eating, food safety, riding the school bus, riding or driving in a car, walking, riding a bicycle and bullying.

To download and print this flyer, visit the Boston Public Health Commission's main website:

<http://bphc.org>  
or find it directly at:

<http://www.bphc.org/Documents/Back%20to%20school%20safety%20tips.pdf>

